Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Proposed Elements for Inclusion in the Report of the Preparatory Committee on its Third session

Working paper submitted by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan

1. The "Principles and Objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament" agreed at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference encouraged the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, as a matter of priority. Since 1995, two additional nuclear-weapon-free zones have been established, respectively in Southeast Asia and Africa. The Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, and Pelindaba continue to make an important contribution to the nuclear nonproliferation regime while also representing a significant step toward the ultimate goal of the elimination of all nuclear weapons, under strict and effective international control. After the Pelindaba Treaty's entry into force, nuclear-weapon-free zones will cover the entire Southern Hemisphere, in addition to Antarctica, the seabed, and outer space with 114 member-states.

2. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan are unanimous in their belief that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world contributes substantially to nuclear disarmament and promotes the strengthening of peace and stability at the regional and global levels. Recent events in South Asia have underscored the importance of the nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation regime at a time when it faces serious challenges. They also demonstrate the importance of regional approaches to disarmament and nonproliferation, which can strengthen the global nonproliferation regime.

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3. The Preparatory Committee notes with satisfaction that on 9 December 1998, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 53/77 A, "Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia" by consensus, which calls on all states to support the initiative aimed at the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, commends the first concrete steps taken by the Central Asian states to create the legal groundwork to support their initiative, and requests the UN Secretary-General to provide assistance to the Central Asian states as they prepare the form and elements of an agreement on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia.

4. The Preparatory Committee also welcomes the concrete steps taken by the Central Asian states toward implementing the Almaty Declaration of the heads of State of the Central Asian States of 28 February 1997 and the Statement issued in Tashkent on 15 September 1997 by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. These steps have included expert-level meetings in Geneva, Bishkek and Tashkent. The Bishkek meeting held on 9-10 July 1998 included experts from the nuclear weapon states (P-5), the United Nations (UN) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), while the Tashkent meeting held on 1-3 February 1999 and the Geneva meetings included UN and IAEA representatives. As a result of these meetings, significant progress has been made toward drafting a treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. The Central Asian states welcome the continued assistance of interested international organizations and states as they move forward with this process. It is the sincere hope of the five Central Asian states that the treaty establishing the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone will be completed and ready for signature at the earliest date possible.

5. The Preparatory Committee also recalls the report of Main Committee III of the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which notes that there have been exceptional instances in which serious environmental consequences have resulted from uranium mining and associated nuclear fuel-cycle activities in the production of nuclear weapons. The Preparatory Committee reiterates the 1995 Conference's call upon all Governments and international organizations that have expertise in the field of clean-up and disposal of radioactive contaminants to consider giving appropriate assistance as may be requested for remedial purposes in those affected areas.